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Claims:-

1. A snatch disconnection lanyard assembly (2,4,6,10,44,52) comprising a tensioner (2), characterised in that the tensioner (2) may be set to allow paying out of the lanyard (4,6,10) or set to pull in the lanyard (4,6,10) and when set to pull in, will resist paying out of the lanyard (4,6,10), thereby providing a tensile force for snatch disconnection.

2. A lanyard assembly (2,4,6,10,44,52) as defined in claim 1 characterised in that, when the tensioner (2) is set to allow paying out the lanyard (4,6,10), pulling in of the lanyard (4,6,10) by the tensioner (2) is resisted.

3. A lanyard assembly (2,4,6,10,44,52) as defined in claim 1 or 2 characterised in that it comprises a tensioning cable (6) attached to or comprising the lanyard (4,6,10).

4. A lanyard assembly (2,4,6,10,44,52) according to claim 3 characterised in that, in use, the tensioning cable (6) is wound up onto and unwound from a reel (8) which is spring biased to wind up the cable (6).

5. A lanyard assembly (2,4,6,10,44,52) according to claim 4 characterised in that it comprises a mounting bracket (44), a housing (2) for the reel (8) and a flexible conduit (52) extending between the bracket (44) and the housing (2) and through which the tensioning cable (6) runs.

6. A lanyard assembly (2,4,6,10,44,52) according to claim 4 or 5 characterised in that it comprises a ratchet mechanism (12, 16) which can be set to resist rotation of the reel (8) in the unwinding direction, thereby resisting paying out of the lanyard (4,6,10), but additionally and alternatively can be reset to resist rotation of the reel (8) in the winding up direction, thereby allowing paying out of the lanyard (4,6,10) and resisting pulling in of the lanyard (4,6,10) whilst a snatch connection (7,9) is made up.

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7. A lanyard assembly (2,4,6,10,44,52) according to claim 6 characterised in that it is biased towards the set condition and is moved to the reset condition by rotation of a key (20) inserted into the assembly, counter-rotation of the inserted key (20) being resisted by a further ratchet mechanism (34,36,37).

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8. A lanyard assembly (2,4,6,10,44,52) according to any preceding claim, characterised in that it comprises a brake (48,54,55) operable to resist paying out of the lanyard (4,6,10) at above a predetermined speed.

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9. A snatch disconnection lanyard assembly (2,4,6,10,44,52) according to any preceding claim characterised by a resilient link (4) connected to the lanyard (6,10), opposed parts of the link (4) each carrying abutment faces (40), the respective abutment faces (40) on either side being brought into contact with each other when the link (4) has been deformed by a predetermined amount.

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10. A lanyard assembly (2,4,6,10,44,52) as defined in claim 9 characterised in that the abutments (40), when in contact, transmit tensile loads applied to the connector opposed parts (7,9).

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11. A lanyard assembly (2,4,6,10,44,52) according to claim 9 or 10 characterised in that the lanyard has a plurality of ends (10) attached to a connector half (7) at spaced circumferential locations, the link (4) comprising a spreader bar connected between a tensioning cable (6) and the lanyard.

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